wherein the tooth positions defined by the cavities in each successive appliance differ from those defined by the previous appliance by no more than 2 mm.

55.   (New) An improved method as in claim 54, wherein at least four geometries determined at the outset.

56.   (New) An improved method as in claim 55, wherein at least ten geometries are determined at the outset.

57.   (New) An improved method as in claim 56, wherein at least twenty-five geometries are determined at the outset.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 were examined. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indicated allowability of claims 3, 9, and 18. The claims have been amended, canceled, and new claims added, as noted above. Re-examination and reconsideration of the claims, as amended, are respectfully requested.
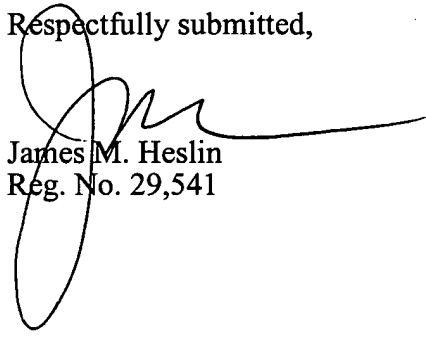
As an initial matter, Applicants note that all non-elected claims have now been canceled without prejudice to refiling in a subsequent application.

All claim rejections have been stated over U.S. Patent No. 5,017,133 to Miura alone or in combination with U.S. Patent No. 4,856,991 to Breads et al. Such rejections have been overcome by the above amendments as stated in the Interview Summary dated June 8, 1999.

Applicants have introduced new claims 45-57 intended to recite the subject matter of allowed dependent claims 3, 9, and 18. In particular, new independent claim 45 is equivalent to allowed dependent claim 3; new independent claim 49 is equivalent to allowed dependent claim 9; and new independent claim 54 is equivalent to allowed dependent claim 18.

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If for any reason the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would in any way expedite prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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